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ACCOUNT

OF THE

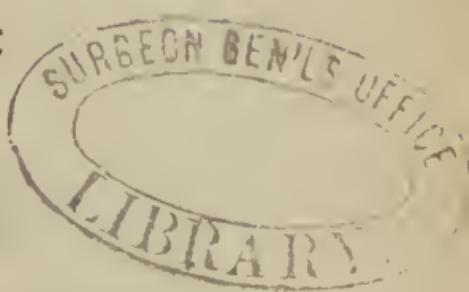
DESIGN, ORIGIN,

AND

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OF THE

PHILADELPHIA DISPENSARY.

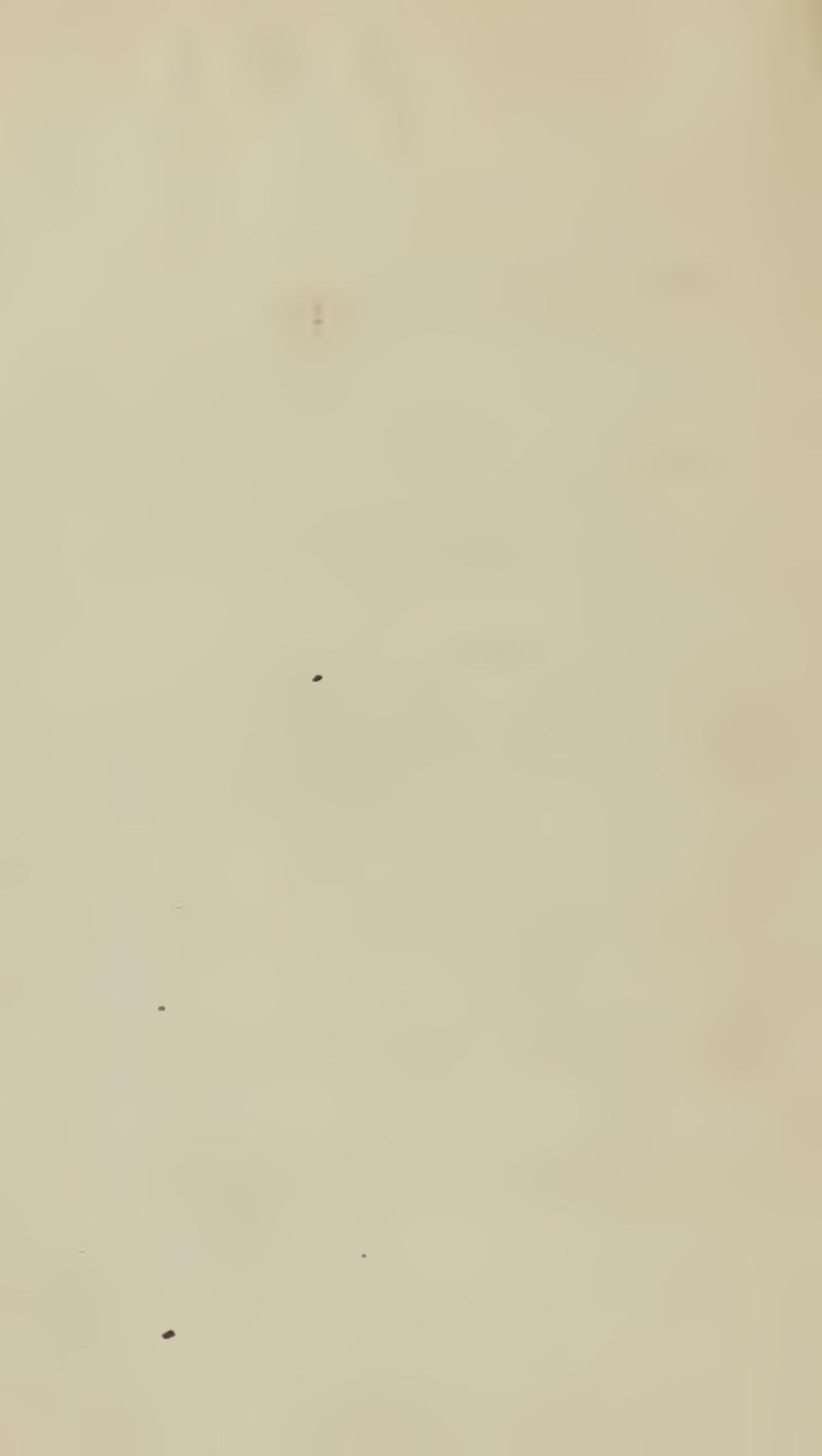


PHILADELPHIA:

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1805.



ACCOUNT
OF THE
DESIGN, ORIGIN, AND PRESENT STATE
OF THE
PHILADELPHIA DISPENSARY.

A CONSIDERATION of the distresses of the Poor, when afflicted with disease, and of their inability to provide for themselves in such a situation, gave rise to the design of establishing a Dispensary for their relief, in 1786. This first effort of the kind in the United States of America has been attended with the happiest effects, and the example has been followed in most of our principal cities.

THE objects of the Institution are the *indigent sick*, of every description, and in

every disease, when recommended by the Contributors....They are visited at their own houses, when unable to go abroad ; but those who can come out, attend at the Dispensary, where the physicians prescribe for them at stated times.

THE apothecary resides at the Dispensary, receives applications for admission, and records the name, age, occupation, and residence of the patients ; their diseases, the event, and the name of the Contributor who recommends them. He gives information thereof to the attending physicians, when they require being visited at their own houses....he prepares and records all the prescriptions of the Physicians, including medicines, wine, sago, oatmeal and barley. When cured, the patients are required to take a discharge to the contributor who recommended them.

THE city and liberties are divided into two districts. Two physicians are on du-

ty at the same time ; who, on the alternate days of the week, attend, at the Dispensary, such patients of their respective districts, as are able to go abroad.

THE funds of the institution are, Five Dollars annually paid by each Contributor ; or, Ten Guineas at one payment, constituting a life subscription...Legacies, and Donations also form a considerable part of the Fund.

THE form of a Legacy is as follows....
“ I give and bequeath to the Philadelphia Dispensary, the sum of to be paid to their Treasurer for the time being, and applied towards carrying on the charitable designs of the said Institution.”

THE general business of the institution is directed by twelve Managers, who are annually elected by the contributors. The Managers meet every month, and annual-

ly appoint six attending, and four consulting Physicians and Surgeons, a Treasurer, and an Apothecary. A charter of Incorporation was procured in 1796.

THE attending Physicians are on duty, in succession, for two months at a time. They apply to the Consulting Physicians in difficult cases. The physicians give their attendance gratis.

THE want of a convenient situation was, for a long time, sensibly felt by the Managers, and induced them in 1800, to purchase a lot of ground in Fifth-street, and to erect thereon, a commodious building. The funds for this purpose consisted of some stock purchased with former savings....of donations, solicited for the purpose amongst our fellow-citizens....and of several liberal bequests. A debt, however, still remains on the lot and building, and although a very strict attention to economy is regarded, yet the annual con-

tributions are seldom sufficient to answer the expenses, as the number of patients has, for some time past, been upwards of two thousand, every year. But we now indulge the pleasing hope, that the Institution may be considered as permanently established.

OFFICERS OF THE INSTITUTION,

Elected, January, 1805.

MANAGERS.

William White,
Samuel Pleasants,
Henry Helmuth,
Robert Blackwell,
Lawrence Seckel,
George Fox,
Robert Smith,
John Kaighn,
Godfrey Haga,
Robert Ralston,
Ebenezer Hazard,
Samuel P. Griffitts.

Attending Physicians and Surgeons.

Dr. John B. C. Rousseau,
James Stuart,
Nathaniel Chapman,
Peter Miller,
Charles Meredith,
James Hutchinson.

Consulting Physicians and Surgeons.

Dr. William Shippen,
Adam Kuhn,
Benjamin Rush,
Thomas Parke.

Treasurer....John Clifford.

Apothecary....Henry Wismer.

Published by direction of the Board of
Managers,

WILLIAM WHITE, *President.*

Philadelphia, Feb. 27th, 1805.

